

March 28, 2023

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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF Bill 16-23 Landlord-Tenant Relations – Rent  
Stabilization (The HOME Act)**

**My name is Julia Sarmiento. I am a Tenant Services & Eviction Prevention Program Manager in Montgomery County. I am submitting this testimony in support of the need for rental control in Montgomery County.**

At LEDC, for over 30 years, we have worked to help low-to-moderate income Latino and other DC residents buy and stay in their homes, join with neighbors to keep their rental housing affordable, and start or expand small businesses. In Montgomery County, I have seen a rise in evictions due to many factors including rising rent costs.

Rental control is necessary to keep families in their home. I have seen how without these regulations, the power that landlords have goes unchecked. The children of families who are displaced must readjust to life in a new place and are often traumatized from the eviction proceedings. **Last week, there were 89 evictions filed in Montgomery County.** This violence can be prevented by passing legislation that places a cap on how much landlords are able to raise rent in addition to CPI-U inflation, like bill 16-23.

Most recently I worked with a family where only one parent is able to work. The family has three children and one of the kids has a disability and requires 24/7 attention. The mother is a stay-at-home parent taking care of the 3 children but as a result of only having one income, they are unable to pay the full rental amount. When their lease expires and the rent is increased, the family can face eviction.

We also heard from a family who received a notice to vacate because the landlord increased their rent and unfortunately the family was unable to pay the new rent amount. They fell behind on rent and now the landlord is using the situation to evict the family. Rent became unaffordable for the family and now they are at risk of losing the stability of a roof over their head.

In FY 22, LEDC helped **890 tenants** in Maryland receive one-on-one support with applications for rental assistance and accessing other critical resources to prevent eviction and meet basic needs. Families will continue to become displaced if legislation is not created to prevent rental prices from skyrocketing.

Bill 16-23 addresses the much-needed rental inflation protections for families in Montgomery County who have seen record numbers of evictions and shelter occupancy rates as rental prices become increasingly unaffordable. Placing a 3% cap on the rental component of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) percentage will help keep Montgomery County residents in their homes. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on Bill 16-23.**